

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. (Original) A computer-implemented method comprising:
storing data about a plurality of member entities that have a relationship with a group entity;
associating a state variable with each member entity;
automatically updating the state variable of each member entity with one of a group of predefined, first states, in response to applying one of a set of predefined, rules to analyze some of the stored data, wherein the set of rules are defined in part by the group entity; and
automatically determining whether or not online content is to be delivered to each member entity based on the state variable of the member entity.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the stored data includes data that has been derived from online interaction between each member entity and the group entity.
3. (Original) An article of manufacture having a machine-accessible medium with data stored therein that, when accessed by a machine, associates a state variable with each of a plurality of member entities that have a relationship with a group entity, automatically updates the state variable of each member entity with one of a group of predefined states in response to applying one of a set of predefined rules to analyze some of stored data that is about the plurality of member entities, wherein the set of rules are defined in part by the group entity, and automatically determines whether or not online content is to be delivered to each member entity based on the state variable of the member entity.
4. (Original) A computer-implemented method comprising:
storing data about a plurality of member entities that have a relationship with a group entity;
associating a state variable with each member entity;
automatically updating the state variable of each member entity with one of a group of predefined, first states, in response to applying one of a set of predefined, rules to analyze some of the stored data, wherein the set of rules are defined in part by the group entity; and
automatically personalizing online content that is to be delivered to each member entity, wherein the state variable determines in part how the online content for the member entity is personalized.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein the stored data includes data that has been derived from online communications between each member entity and the group entity.

6. (Original) An article of manufacture having a machine-accessible medium with data stored therein that, when accessed by a machine, associates a state variable with each of a plurality of member entities that have a relationship with a group entity, automatically updates the state variable of each member entity with one of a group of predefined states in response to applying one of a set of predefined rules to analyze some of stored data that is about the plurality of member entities, wherein the set of rules are defined in part by the group entity, and automatically personalizes online content that is to be delivered to each member entity, wherein the state variable determines in part how the online content for the member entity is personalized.

7-31. (Cancelled)

32. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the group of predefined, first states includes the following three states: 1) a customer who is less than two weeks old; 2) a customer who is at least two weeks old and has purchased a product or used a service of the merchant; and 3) a customer who is at least two weeks old and has not used the service. .

33. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 3, wherein the states include new customer status, whether a new customer has not used a service within a predetermined period of time, and whether the new customer is likely to subscribe to certain additional services.

34. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the first states include new customer status, whether a new customer has not used a service within a predetermined period of time, and whether the new customer is likely to subscribe to certain additional services.

35. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the data relates to one of native data and arbitrary data, the native data being inherently understandable as relating to the customers, the arbitrary data being information imported into the system.

36. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 3, wherein the data relates to one of native data and arbitrary data, the native data being inherently understandable as relating to the customers, the arbitrary data being information imported into the system.

37. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the data relates to one of native data and arbitrary data, the native data being inherently understandable as relating to the customers, the arbitrary data being information imported into the system.